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INTERNATIONAL YACHTING IN 1893.

BY GEORGE A. STEWART, DESIGNER OF THE "PILGRIM."

HAD anyone ventured the prediction, during the summer of 1892, that the next season would see nine new 90-foot sloops striving for supremacy on both sides of the Atlantic, he would have been considered to be a person of a very highly developed imagination. In previous years an America Cup challenge has succeeded in bringing out one, or, at most, two defenders. But here, by means of the cross challenges that have been issued, we see the unprecedented number of nine new single-stickers of the largest size, all built to achieve the highest speed yet attained in craft propelled by sails.

It is a magnificent fleet, and it is a pity that the circumstances of the case prevent a meeting of all in the same contest. The spectacle of nine cutters of the largest size contending for one prize would be the grandest that ever delighted a yachtsman's eyes.

It has become the fashion lately to say that with the perfection of steam, and, further still, electricity, the sailing yacht will soon be a thing of the past—that in the hurry and bustle of modern civilization the uncertainty of the sailing yacht must give way to the speed and schedule time accuracy of the steam or electric yacht. I predict, on the contrary, that the sailing yacht will continue to increase in popular favor. The sporting instinct is highly developed in man, and with the trial and approval of the recent great improvements in the speed of sailing yachts, the stimulus will be felt to still greater advances. There is no excitement so rare as that of a close and well-sustained contest, and the racing of steam-propelled craft has never satisfied this feeling. The varying changes of the weather, the opportunity afforded for the triumph of personal skill in the management of wheel and sails,

and of correct judgment of the best course to be taken, all these things combine to make the racing of the sailing yacht one of the highest forms of sport known to man. These conditions appeal to the cruising men as well. The very uncertainty of the time when port can be reached, with its added pleasure of formulating new plans, and exploring untried harbors, adds zest to the cruise of the leisurely yachtsman, and he would laugh at the idea of exchanging his fickle but satisfying plaything for the 16-knot-an-hour steam yacht. For the busy man, steam yachts will still continue to increase and fill a very necessary part in the economy of pleasure navigation, but I believe that they will fill their own sphere without affecting the progress of the sailing yacht.

Mr. Carroll's plucky challenge to the British fleet drew attention to the big sloop class last fall, and when this was followed by Lord Dunraven's spirited challenge for the America Cup, the interest grew fast. The Prince of Wales commissioned Watson to design him a racing cutter, so that the designer of the "Thistle" will have two representatives, the Prince of Wales's "Britannia" stopping at home to defend the Cape May and Brenton's Reef cups and the Royal Victoria Yacht Club Cup from Mr. Carroll's "Navahoe," while Lord Dunraven's "Valkyrie" crosses the Atlantic to do battle for the America Cup in our waters. Not content with this, a Scotch syndicate commissioned Designer Fife to put the "Calluna" in the lists for them; and, lastly, Designer Soper got a chance, and "Satanita" made the fourth British yacht to be built.

Meanwhile matters dragged here in America. A syndicate of New York yachtsmen commissioned Designer Herreshoff to build a yacht for the cup's defence, and many were inclined to let the matter rest there. The idea of "not carrying all the eggs in one basket," however, had sufficient force to induce a second New York syndicate to lodge an order with the Bristol firm. Still the feeling of insecurity continued, as but one designer was represented in the two boats. General Paine thereupon entered the lists, and finally a syndicate of Boston yachtsmen commissioned Stewart & Binney to design a yacht to represent the Hub.

Secrecy, at least in the primary stages of a yacht's development, has become the rule among designers. For this reason the exact facts as to the different yachts are not yet public property, but the main features of nearly all have become pretty generally known.

The four British yachts, "Valkyrie," "Britannia," "Calluna" and "Satanita," judging from what little is known about them on this side at this writing, appear to be craft of considerable similarity of type. All are represented as being keel boats, there being no centreboarders or fins among them; all are boats of large sail-carrying power and several of them are represented as exceeding the "Volunteer's" sail plan considerably.

It is in this matter of sail plan that the British fleet will show the greatest divergence from former practice. Heretofore trans-Atlantic designers, encouraged somewhat by their rules of measurement, have striven to attain the highest speed with small sails and hulls of small resistance. The "Thistle" was a bold departure from British practice, yet even she was inferior to the "Volunteer" in sail spread. Another point that is noticeable among the new British yachts is the manner in which the masts have been moved forward, which gives a large area of mainsail, and, thanks to the modern system of long overhangs, a very short bowsprit.

The American craft show no such similarity in design. The "Navahoe" is more or less on the order of the American sloop as represented by "Volunteer," though "Navahoe" is deeper than "Volunteer," has the full lines and long overhangs that have now become fashionable both here and in Great Britain, and also carries a sail-plan by the side of which that of the cup-defender of '87 seems modestly small. The Rogers syndicate boat is a deep keel yacht of about 24 feet beam and 16 feet draught, and is modelled after the 46-footer "Wasp." The Morgan-Iselin syndicate has built a centreboard boat of 26 feet beam and 12 feet draught. The Rogers and Morgan-Iselin boats carry enormous sail plans.

General Paine, with the aid of his son John, has designed a modified fin boat. She has the canoe form of the fin keel, and the fin with a bulb lead keel bolted to it, but through the fin a metal centreboard plays. The Paine boat has a beam of about 22½ feet, and a draught in the neighborhood of 14 feet. The Boston syndicate's contribution to cup defence is of the fin keel type, though she also has a centreboard, which in this case is a small steering contrivance, and is put in well forward. Her beam is about 23 feet and her draught about 22. All the American yachts will be about 85 feet long on the water line, with an over-

all length of upwards of 120 feet, and the English boats will not differ much from these figures.

All the American boats, at least, are of the sort which the friends of the new order of things will call "racing yachts," and the enemies "racing machines." That is to say, in none of them has the idea of cruising comfort been allowed to interfere with the freedom of design. Speed is the one object aimed at in their construction. Not but that all could be converted into cruisers, and doubtless will be at the close of the racing season. Still, the high power of the Herreshoff boats, necessitating large sails, and therefore large crews, is not in the line of best cruising comfort, and the same may be said of the Paine boat, as her sail-plan is represented as being not so much smaller than those of the Herreshoff boats. The draught of the Stewart & Binney boat puts her out of consideration as a cruiser, as she now is, but with her draught decreased she could be converted into a cruiser which would have the advantage of being able to attain good speed with a very small sail-plan, a desirable object in a cruising yacht. Still, the question of adaptability as cruisers has not been considered very seriously in building this year's cup-defenders, and they will be judged by their speed as racers.

At this writing the British boats have already had half a dozen races, and it is satisfactory to note that the "Valkyrie" seems to be at or near the head of the fleet in speed. It would be small honor to beat her on this side, if she were unable to do creditable work in her own waters. So far, the "Valkyrie" and "Britannia," the two Watson boats, have justified the prediction of their designer, that they would be about equal in speed, as each has won a couple of races, and they usually have finished within a minute or two of each other. The Scotch syndicate boat "Calluna" has suffered through the carrying away of her mast. This accident, necessitating a green stick, is a serious handicap, but so far "Calluna" has not shown herself the equal of the Watson boats. "Satanita," the Soper craft, has been behind the others in preparation, and so far she has not shown to the front. The new boats have beaten the "Iverna" sufficiently to stamp them as fast boats, though just how much it is necessary to exceed the "Iverna" to reach the "Volunteer" standard it is hard to estimate. As these lines are penned none of the American cup-defenders has been tried under canvas. "Navahoe" has been sailed, and

with her "tenderness" cured bids fair to give a good account of herself in foreign waters.

The development of the America Cup defenders is a history full of interest to the thoughtful yachtsman. With the building of "Papoose" in 1887 the tentative process in American designing may be said to have been inaugurated. For the next three years, the 40-footers held sway, and many problems of form, ballasting, light construction and rigging, were worked out. This class culminated in the keen racing between "Gossoon" and "Minerva" in 1890, the fine little Fife cutter having more than held her own against the whole American fleet for two seasons. In 1891, the 46-footers, by far the swiftest class of yachts built up to that time, compelled the admiration of yachtsmen, and the success of "Gloriana," "Harpoon" and "Wasp" have furnished ideas which are thoroughly incorporated in the fleet of 1893.

But, strange as it may seem, the class which has done the most for the cup-defenders of 1893 was one of comparative pigmies—the Boston 21-footers of last year. Judged by the speed of our corresponding classes here and abroad this class of 21-footers may well lay claim to being the fastest class of yachts ever built.

All the designers of the cup-defenders of this year had representatives in the 21-foot class, and the lessons of that keen competition are easily seen in the big 90-footers. It seems almost absurd to base a fleet of 90-footers on the performances of so small a class as 21-footers, yet the experiments made in the 21-foot class were so original and the results so striking that the temptation to adapt the ideas from the small to the large craft was irresistible, so that the cup-defenders of 1893 embody more original features than any similar large fleet ever built, and most of these original features had their first expression in the 21-foot class of 1892.

Previous to 1892 the distinction into keels and centreboarders had been sufficient to distinguish the types of yachts, but with the introduction of the new 21-foot class, keel boats, bulb keel boats, fin keels, narrow centreboarders, wide centreboarders and weighted centreboarders—all these terms were needed to distinguish the various types that were contending together.

The lessons to be proven from the big sloop racing of 1893 are incalculable in their number and magnitude. In the case of the two Herreshoff cup-defenders we have the experiment of sail-

plans which are enormous compared with that of "Volunteer." The two Boston boats will show the possibilities of the fin-keel type—the form which gives the maximum of sail-carrying power to the minimum of displacement. The Paine boat will work out the problem in conjunction with a big sail-plan and a centre-board, with moderate draught of fin, while the Stewart-Binney craft clings more closely to the original idea of the fin, namely deep draught of fin-plate and moderately small sail-plan.

In construction, too, light weight of scantling and light rigging have been carried to an extreme never before attempted. The Morgan-Iselin boat has a Tobin bronze bottom, being the first vessel that has ever used this material for plating. While adding greatly to the expense, it insures a smooth bottom. Sails of a high grade of cotton are to be used on all the American cup-defenders, by means of which the weight of a suit of canvas for a 90-footer is considerably reduced. All these experiments, while they add greatly to the possibilities of speed, also increase in like manner the possibilities of failure. It is to be hoped that every one of the boats will be successful in showing the possibilities of her type, in which case it is fair to assume that all will be considerably faster than "Volunteer" was in 1887, and that the chosen defender will show a turn of speed hitherto unapproached.

The season in Great Britain is sure to be full of interest. The racing there is in full swing, and the British idea of circuit racing, in which each racing yacht "takes in" nearly every race that is sailed in the United Kingdom—racing one day and cruising to the next port the next, sometimes sailing all night in order to take part in races that are sailed on consecutive days—this plan insures a satiety of racing even for the most enthusiastic owner and crew. Doubtless they will institute trial races similar to ours, by which their best boat will be selected to meet the "Navahoe." The English yachtsmen have still our Cape May and Brenton's Reef challenge cups in their possession, which were won by the "Genesta" when she was here in 1885. They will strain every nerve to keep these trophies, as well as their own Royal Victoria Yacht Club Cup, from the hands of the covetous Yankee.

Our racing season is very different from that of the English. To begin with, our cup-defenders were all started so late that they

will hardly be in form by the first of August. This will prevent any racing till the beginning of the New York Yacht Club cruise, and the Goelet Cup race is likely to be the first meeting of all four of our defenders. That race will be looked forward to with keen interest, and the winner will feel proud at having secured the first point in the competition for the honor of being the one chosen to meet the "Valkyrie."

Besides the cruising runs, there will doubtless be other races off Newport, cups for such races having been already offered by Mr. John Jacob Astor.

The races for the America Cup have been set to begin October 5, and as they are to be best three out of five this year, instead of two out of three as formerly, it is likely, with the usual number of postponements on account of fog or lack of wind, that this date will bring the close of the series well into October, which is pretty late for yachting weather. It is possible that an earlier date may be set, as Lord Dunraven has asked for such a change, but as all our boats were late in starting, it is probable that the cup committee will be sure that no harm is done to any one of our cup-defenders before acceding to the challenger's request. Should all our boats be in readiness, however, it is likely that the cup races may be set for an earlier date some time in September.

Whatever the date of the final races, the trial races for the selection of the American champion must be held at some time between the close of the New York Yacht Club cruise and the date of the final races. As the trials will take up considerable time, and as a period of preparation is necessary for the trial races, and also considerable time will be needed for the chosen yacht to prepare for her final effort, it is probable that there will be little spare time after the close of the New York Yacht Club cruise, and the trials and final races are likely to furnish most of the racing that the cup-defenders will be able to enter.

While the race for the America Cup will be the chief event of the year, the trial races of our four cup-defenders will furnish rare sport. Should the yachts be evenly matched, the racing between our own boats would be fully as exciting as the cup races, and the evolutions of four such mammoth single-stickers, with the splendid seamanship which is sure to be developed, will be well worth witnessing.

The final races themselves will repeat these splendid specta-

cles, and without doubt the cup races of 1893 will draw the largest attendance and excite the liveliest interest in the history of international yacht competition.

A word is in place about the sportsmanship of the owners who have contributed to make this great fleet a success. For the mere glory of a friendly competition a fleet has been built, representing an outlay which will be a large percentage of a million dollars. It is an ephemeral thing, and the owners well know that, with the progress nowadays made in yacht building, all of the present fleet are likely to be out-built by another year. If funds are furnished by private enterprise so readily for the mere generous rivalry of an international sporting event, it can readily be believed that the patriotism of the Anglo-Saxon race will be equal to any test to which it may be subjected.

GEORGE A. STEWART.